

“(6) At the option of such agency, offer (directly or through referral to local entities) to such parents—

“(A) training in basic child development (including cognitive, social, and emotional development);

“(B) assistance in developing literacy and communication skills;

“(C) opportunities to share experiences with other parents (including parent-mentor relationships);

“(D) mental and behavioral health services;

“(E) regular in-home visitation; or

“(F) any other activity designed to help such parents become full partners in the education of their children.

“(7) Provide, with respect to each participating family, a family needs assessment that includes consultation with such parents, in a manner and language that such parents can understand, about the benefits of parent involvement and about the activities described in paragraphs (5) through (8) in which such parents may choose to be involved (taking into consideration their specific family needs, work schedules, and other responsibilities).

“(8) Consider providing services to assist younger siblings of children participating in its Head Start program to obtain health, including mental health, services from other sources.

“(9) Perform community outreach to encourage individuals previously unaffiliated with Head Start programs to participate in its Head Start program as volunteers.

“(10)(A) Inform custodial parents in single-parent families that participate in programs, activities, or services carried out or provided under this subchapter about the availability of child support services for purposes of establishing paternity and acquiring child support; and

“(B) Refer eligible parents to the child support offices of State and local governments.

“(11) Provide parents of limited English proficient children outreach and services under this subchapter, in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that such parents can understand.

“(12) Provide technical and other support needed to enable parents and area residents to secure on their own behalf available assistance from public and private sources.

“(13) Promote the continued involvement of the parents (including grandparents and kinship caregivers, as appropriate) of children that participate in Head Start programs in the education of their children upon transition to school, the Head Start agency shall work with the local educational agency—

“(A) to provide training to the parents;

“(i) to inform the parents about their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children; and

“(ii) to enable the parents—

“(I) to understand and work with schools in order to communicate with teachers and other school personnel;

“(II) to support the schoolwork of their children; and

“(III) to participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children; and

“(B) to take other actions, as appropriate and feasible, to support the active involvement of the parents with schools, school personnel, and school-related organizations.

“(14) Provide parents of a child suspected of having a disability information about services available under section 619 or part C of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.) and refer such child to the appropriate agency for an evaluation of eligibility under such Act.

“(c) PROGRAM GOVERNANCE.—Head Start agencies must establish and maintain a formal structure of shared governance through which an independent governing body with legal and fiscal responsibility for administering and overseeing programs under this subchapter and a

parent policy council and parent policy committee, as appropriate, shall ensure that such agency operates a high quality Head Start program in compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

“(1) GOVERNING BODY.—

“(A) COMPOSITION.—The governing body shall be composed as follows:

“(i) Not less than 1 member with significant financial management or accounting experience.

“(ii) Not less than 1 member shall have a background and expertise in early childhood development.

“(iii) Not less than 1 member shall be a licensed attorney familiar with issues that come before the governing body.

“(iv) Additional members shall be selected for their expertise in education, business administration, and community affairs and shall reflect the community served.

“(v) Exceptions shall be made when members of the governing body oversee a public entity and are selected by public election or are political appointments.

“(B) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—Members of the governing body shall—

“(i) not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency or delegate agencies, exceptions shall be made when a board member of a public entity is selected by election or politically appointed;

“(ii) not receive compensation for the purposes of serving on the governing body or for providing services to the Head Start agency, exceptions shall be made when a board member of a public entity is selected by election or politically appointed;

“(iii) not be employed nor shall members of their immediate family be employed by the Head Start agency or one of its delegate agencies, exceptions shall be made when a board member of a public entity is selected by election or politically appointed; and

“(iv) operate as an entity independent of staff employed by the Head Start agency entity or applicant, exceptions shall be made when a board member of a public entity is selected by election or politically appointed.

“(C) CONSULTANTS.—In the case that persons described in subparagraph (A) are not available to serve as members, the governing body shall make use of consultants in the areas described in subparagraph (A) to work directly with the governing body.

“(D) TRAINING.—All members of the governing body shall receive training in management responsibilities and obligations, ethics, and financial literacy management.

“(E) RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNING BODY.—The governing body shall be responsible for—

“(i) adoption of practices that assure active, independent and informed governance of the Head Start agency;

“(ii) oversight to ensure that the Head Start agency under the direction of the executive director is delivering high quality services to children and families in compliance with all applicable standards in effect under this subchapter and with the applicable performance measures established by the Secretary under section 644;

“(iii) establish an audit and finance committee whose primary responsibility shall be—

“(I) to approve annually the operating budget of the Head Start agency;

“(II) to review and recommend to the governing body the selection of independent auditors who shall report all critical accounting policies and practices to the finance and audit committee, except when the auditor is assigned by the State under State law;

“(III) to review and recommend to the governing body the termination or extension of the existing audit firm at least once every 5 years;

“(IV) to review and advise the governing body of the audit management letter provided pursuant to the chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, and of any audit findings; and

“(V) to monitor agency actions to correct any such audit findings or other actions necessary

to comply with applicable laws (including regulations) governing financial statements and accounting practices;

“(iv) approve all major policies of the agency, including the mission of the agency and policies addressing accounting, financial management, procurement, record confidentiality, and personnel (including specific standards governing salaries, salary adjustments, travel and per diem allowances, and other employee benefits);

“(v) approve all major financial expenditures of the agency;

“(vi) approve the selection or dismissal of the Head Start Director or the equivalent position within the Head Start agency;

“(vii) approve or disapprove all policies, applications, and decisions of the Policy Council made under the authority of paragraph (2);

“(viii) to oversee the program planning of the Head Start agency, including adoption of policies for setting long- and short-range goals and objectives;

“(ix) oversee and approve the agency's applications to receive funds made available under this subchapter; and

“(x) to establish, adopt and periodically update written standards of conduct that establish standards and formal procedures for disclosing, addressing, and resolving—

“(I) any conflict of interest, and any appearance of a conflict of interest, by members of the governing body, officers, employees, consultants and agents who provide services or furnish goods to the Head Start agency; and

“(II) complaints, including investigations, when appropriate.

“(2) POLICY COUNCIL.—

“(A) COMPOSITION.—The Policy Council or Policy Committee, as appropriate, shall be composed as follows:

“(i) Members of the Policy Council shall be either parents of children currently enrolled in the Head Start agency's (or delegate's) Head Start or Early Head Start program or that are parents of children who were enrolled in the program in the previous year (Parent Members) or shall be members of the community served by the Head Start agency or delegate (Community Members).

“(ii) Parent members of the Policy Council shall constitute a majority of the members of the Policy Council and shall be elected by parents of currently enrolled children.

“(iii) Parent members shall represent, proportionately, all program options and settings operated by the Head Start agency or delegate.

“(iv) The term of a Policy Council member shall be no more than 2 years and no Policy Council member shall serve longer than 6 years.

“(B) RESPONSIBILITIES OF POLICY COUNCIL.—In order to be designated as a Head Start agency, an entity or delegate of such an entity shall have a Policy Council which shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about the following activities:

“(i) The strategic direction of the program, including long and short-term planning goals and objectives (such planning and goals shall take into account the annual community assessment and self-assessment).

“(ii) Selection of delegate agencies and their service areas.

“(iii) Recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.

“(iv) Funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start or Early Head Start prior to submission of such applications.

“(v) Budget planning for program expenditures.

“(vi) Bylaws for the operation of the Policy Council including procedures by which Policy Council members are chosen.

“(vii) Program personnel policies, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors and volunteers.

“(viii) Decisions regarding employment of Head Start staff other than the director and executive director.